

# NEWS



**Forest Service**

*United States  
Department of  
Agriculture*

**Inyo  
National Forest**

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## FOREST SERVICE ANNOUNCES NEW VISITOR CENTER MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

MAMMOTH LAKES, Calif., Feb. 19, 2013 – The Inyo National Forest is proposing to issue a temporary special use permit to the Eastern Sierra Interpretive Association (ESIA), to operate and help maintain the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area Visitor Center and the Mammoth Lakes Welcome Center for the 2013 season. The new management strategy is not being proposed for the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Visitor Center or Interagency Visitor Center in Lone Pine, although the strategy could be considered at these locations in the future.

Due to declining budgets and increasing operations and maintenance costs the US Forest Service (USFS) is reconsidering the management of visitor centers on the Inyo National Forest. The USFS is working with ESIA, its partner of 41 years, to develop a new management strategy for visitor centers. Under the proposed strategy, ESIA will assume daily management responsibilities for visitor centers under a special use permit from the US Forest Service. ESIA will also work to develop new revenue programs to support visitor center management and to further the non-profit organization's mission to deliver interpretive and education opportunities to the public. The proposed management strategy relies upon a suite of agreements and changes in visitor center operations that will help the USFS and ESIA meet their mutual goal of re-establishing these facilities as important community centers that connect the public to their lands.

The USFS recognizes the important role that visitor center facilities play in in the region and the interests that are shared by cooperators and the public. The Forest Service will present the proposed strategy and field questions at two public meetings. The first meeting will be held at the Lee Vining Community Center on Tuesday, March 5<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. The second meeting will be held at the Mammoth Ranger Station Auditorium on Thursday, March 7<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 7:00 PM. Persons with an interest in the future management of visitor centers on the Inyo National Forest are encouraged to attend. Comments and suggestions are welcome.

For additional information, details about the meetings, or to discuss the proposed strategy, please contact District Recreation Officer, Jon Kazmierski, at 760-924-5503 or by e-mail at [jkazmierski@fs.fed.us](mailto:jkazmierski@fs.fed.us).

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